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Current Events

[Edited by Clarence W. Gleason, Roxbury Latin School, Boston, Mass., for the territory covered by the Association of New England and the Atlantic States; Daniel W. Lothman, East High School, Cleveland, Ohio, for the Middle States, west to the Mississippi River; Walter Miller, the University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., for the Southern States; and by Frederick C. Eastman, the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, for the territory of the Association west of the Mississippi, exclusive of Louisiana and Texas. News from the Pacific Coast may be sent to Miss Juliann A. Roller, Franklin High School, Portland, Ore., and to Miss Bertha Green, Hollywood High School, Los Angeles, Cal. This department will present everything that is properly news—occurrences from month to month, meetings, changes in faculties, performances of various kinds, etc. All news items should be sent to the associate editors named above.]

California

Hollywood.—The Latin play presented at the Hollywood High School on March 1 and 2 was an unprecedented success and showed, more vividly than by words, not only the value, but also the appreciation of a classical training. On both days of the production the auditorium was crowded and many were refused tickets. More than forty schools were represented in the audience, and some of the spectators had traveled two hundred and fifty miles in order to be present.

The play chosen was Miller's *Dido, the Phoenician Queen*, which had been translated back into Latin by the students of the Virgil class. The "Hymn to the Dawn" was exceptionally well done and deserves especial commendation. This translation work was of the utmost educational value to the students and served to interest, not only those who took part, but also the whole senior class.

Under the very efficient direction of Miss Bertha Green, head of the Latin department, rehearsals were many and thorough. Daily practice was maintained for two months, and the marked excellence of the actors in enunciation of the words and in familiarity with the lines astonished even classical teachers, proving beyond question that Latin is a living language. It caused a heart-throb to feel the tremendous force of the Latin in Dido's denunciation of Aeneas (Act III), while the sarcasm of Juno and the quick wit of Venus (Act II) were by no means portrayed in a "dead" tongue!

The prologue in English was beautifully rendered by a Roman maiden, who presented the outline of the play and also explained some of the Phoenician customs. This was followed by a chorus of Romans, who sang the well-known "Arma virumque cano," and then the play began with the "Invocation to the Dawn" sung by the Carthaginian chorus.

Special mention should be made of the "Forest Scene," which opened with a graceful dance of woodland nymphs. The hunting was interrupted by a

realistic thunderstorm—a real eastern storm, with nothing Californian about it! Small wonder that the western boys and girls, now Roman and Carthaginian nobles, were thoroughly frightened and rushed hither and yon, little disguised Cupid being rescued by Dido's page, and Dido herself being rushed by Aeneas to the shelter of a cave.

In the banquet scene there was given a beautiful "Dance of the Lyres," which was thoroughly in harmony with the spirit of the play and added much to the scene itself. An interlude was added between Acts III and IV in the form of a Vestal Virgin Drill. This was particularly artistic, and it served as a most appropriate introduction to the loneliness and tragic sadness of Dido in the following scene.

In the last act the *Aeneid* was followed more closely than in Professor Miller's play; for Iris, as messenger of Juno, was introduced to free the soul of the dying queen, and in her rainbow robe she lent a spiritual beauty to the tragedy as a whole.

The leading parts were played by students who were on the honor roll and who maintained their standing during all the weeks of rehearsal. The thorough mastery of the long lines (which were read throughout with no prompting) and the skilful interpretation of the various characters displayed real scholarship and were in themselves a vital argument for the rich value of a Latin training.

Illinois

Chicago.—The twenty-ninth Educational Conference of the Academies and High Schools in Relations with the University of Chicago was held at the University on April 12 and 13. The general topic of the conference was "The Junior College and the Junior High School." Departmental sections discussed this topic from the standpoint of the several departments. The Greek and Latin section was well attended, with Mr. J. O. Lofberg, of the Oak Park High School, presiding. The papers, which were unusually informing and stimulating, were as follows: "Non-essentials in First- and Second-Year Latin," by Miss Ada Townsend, Evanston Academy; "Greek and Latin in the Junior College," by Mrs. Laurie Frazeur, Nicholas Senn High School; "Latin in the Junior High School," by Miss Anna S. Jones, Central High School, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Massachusetts

The New England Classical Association met at Amherst, on the thirtieth of last March. The sessions, which filled both Friday and Saturday, were held in the Latin room of Amherst College, a meeting-place, not only commodious and comfortable, but singularly attractive and interesting because of its fine pictures and collections of bronzes, models, and casts. In the late afternoon of Friday, President and Mrs. Meiklejohn gave an informal and thoroughly enjoyable tea, and this was followed by a six o'clock dinner, at which more than

a hundred members of the association were the guests of the college. That evening the Amherst Players presented the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles, in a translation by Professor H. deForest Smith. The entire presentation was eminently creditable and so well done as obviously to affect the audience. The interest was held from first to last, and it is not an exaggeration to call it intense at more than one place. The parts of Philoctetes and Neoptolemus, taken by Winfield William Riefler and Henry Willis Wells, respectively, were especially effective. The feeling of the audience during the play was too real to express itself in applause, which came, however, in a great outburst after the curtain fell.

Two substitutions in the published program were made. On account of the illness of Mr. Husband, the time allotted to his paper was filled by Professor C. E. Bennett, of Amherst, who read by request his own verse translations of several odes of Horace, a few of the poems of Catullus, and of the *Pervigilium Veneris*, done in the original meter. "Soon shall love who knows not loving, who hath loved shall love again," was his refrain. It is much to be hoped that his translations will soon be published, as they are decidedly good. Professor Clifford H. Moore, of Harvard, read the paper prepared by Professor Howard. One unusual feature was the address of welcome by President Meiklejohn. So far was it from being commonplace and trite that it stood out as a really significant part of the program. "The business of a college, as I conceive it," said he, "is twofold: first, to make us sensitive to life, i.e., to cultivate taste; secondly, to make young men and women powerful and intelligent to gratify this taste when acquired." "A Fourth Century Man of Letters" was a delightful essay on Ausonius. Perhaps the most enthusiastic reception was accorded to Professor Forbes's paper, "Fallacies in the Argument for the Modern School," a brilliant and convincing reply to Mr. Flexner's *A Model School*. "The General Education Board owes an apology for publishing as expert literature such misleading statistics." "'Language in itself,' says Mr. Flexner, 'has no value.' Have the telephone and telegraph then any value? Language is the instrument of our whole intellectual existence." "Life is a continual struggle with required subjects. The world does not ask, What do you like? but, Can you do this?"

Following the reading of this paper, a committee was appointed to protest to the General Education Board against such a misuse of statistics, and to provide for the publication and circulation of Mr. Forbes's paper in pamphlet form. At an earlier business session two other committees had been appointed to co-operate with the Classical Association of the Middle West and South—one to collect material with a view to improving the teaching of Latin throughout the country, and the other "in search of allies from other branches of learning." As there is an increasing surplus accumulating in the treasury, it was voted to establish a loan collection of slides, coins, models, and casts for the use of members of the Association, and to arrange for the exchange of lecturers and lecture materials among the colleges and high schools of New

England. The expenditure of not more than \$300 for this purpose was authorized during the coming year. The following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President, Mr. J. Edmund Barss, Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, Connecticut; Vice-President, Professor Julia H. Caverno, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts; Secretary-Treasurer, Professor George E. Howes, Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts; members of the Executive Committee (to serve for two years): Professor Paul Nixon, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, and Professor Samuel E. Bassett, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont. The other members of the Executive Committee are Miss Irene Nye, Connecticut College for Women, New London, and Mr. Walter V. McDuffee, Central High School, Springfield, Massachusetts.

On the whole the meeting was well arranged, well attended, interesting, and successful. [Reported by MISS IRENE NYE.]

Michigan

Howell.—On April 6 the Latin department of the Howell High School presented a "Roman Festival." The program was of a miscellaneous nature, the chief features being songs by a chorus of Roman maidens, *A School Boy's Dream*, *Pyramus and Thisbe* adapted from *Decem Fabulae*, and the beautiful Vestal Virgin Drill.

The evening's entertainment was enjoyed by a large and appreciative audience and was financially successful. With the proceeds a picture for the Latin room, "Cicero Addressing the Senate," will be purchased. This was a first attempt on the part of both students and teacher; the splendid spirit of helpfulness and co-operation of the school as a whole was worth all of our efforts.

New Jersey

Princeton University.—While the program for the conference on the value of classical studies to be held at Princeton University on Saturday, June 2, is not yet ready for publication, the preliminary arrangements are being rapidly completed. The addresses will be delivered by men of eminence in fields outside of classical studies. Among the speakers already secured are Henry Cabot Lodge, representing history and public life; Dr. Llewellys Barker, of the Johns Hopkins University, and Dean Vaughn, of the University of Michigan, representing medicine; Dean Pound, of the Harvard Law School, representing law; the editor of the *New York Times* and the editor of the *New York Sun*, representing journalism; Mr. Fairfax Harrison, president of the Southern Railway, and Mr. Alba Johnson, president of the Baldwin Locomotive Works, representing business.

New York

The direct-method demonstration by the New York Latin Club.—At the meeting of the Classical Forum of the New York Latin Club, held March 10 at

Hunter College, New York City, three demonstrations of the direct method were given before an audience of more than 150.

Dr. Edward C. Chickering, of Jamaica High School, New York City, chairman of the Forum, opened the meeting by defining the character and aim of the direct method as differentiated from the distinctively oral, inductive, natural, and conversational methods. The cardinal principles of the direct method are the association of the thing or the act with the Latin word, without the interposition of the English, and the understanding of the Latin sentence without the medium of translation. Its object is first to habituate the pupils to regard and use Latin as a living language, a normal and natural medium of conveying ideas. Once Latin is understood as Latin, translation becomes a valuable exercise, but not before, owing to the extreme differences in idiom and word-usage between the two languages.

To illustrate these principles three classes were conducted before the audience, one of beginners, one of pupils in the middle of their course, and one of pupils shortly to enter college, each class having thirty minutes for its work.

The first class was conducted by Mr. Pincus Hirshcopf, of the Speyer School, a junior high school maintained jointly by Teachers College, Columbia University, and the Department of Education of New York City. The twelve boys in this demonstration had studied Latin one year, with three recitations a week, and averaged thirteen years of age. The recitation presented a systematic conspectus of their first year's work and took the form of a rapid fire of questions and answers, illustrating the pupils' thorough familiarity with case usages and inflections in all declensions, including the pronouns; also with the present and perfect active indicative forms and the obliqua in all conjugations, including *sum* and *possum*. The pupils' accuracy, quickness, and enthusiasm were a delight to see.

The second class was made up of twelve fourth-term high-school boys and girls from Jamaica High School, led by Dr. Harwood Hoadley. After presenting the declension of nouns, adjectives, and pronouns, in sentences, and an analogous form of sentence commutation in various tenses, active and passive, in recta and obliqua, the teacher illustrated the method of handling participles and indirect questions by restating them in other forms. He then set forth the procedure used in explaining a new construction—in this case the purpose clause with *ut* and *ne*—building on the pupils' knowledge of the subjunctive forms and usages already learned. A third part of this demonstration illustrated what is the most important exercise of direct-method work after a continuous text has been begun—namely, the retelling by the pupils in their own words of the narrative they have read. Like all the other work shown, this feature was distinctly not prepared for the occasion; the pupils prefer not to memorize the stories, but to rely on their own power in using the language. The telling of the story selected was extremely well done, four pupils taking up the thread one after another.

A class of six girls from the Alcuin Preparatory School was then conducted by Miss Theodora E. Wye. They had had Latin two years and a half, having passed their College Entrance Examination Board examinations in Cicero at the end of the second year. The work showed the method of attack on a new passage in Vergil, in this case Book vi, vss. 124 ff. The girls first read the passage aloud, sentence by sentence, and then plied their teacher with an avalanche of questions, all, of course, in Latin, and answered in Latin, until the meaning of the passage was clear. Finally, one after another, they translated the passage into most creditable English, showing excellent choice of words, and, it need hardly be said, no jargon. This, which presented the final stage of the direct-method work, was naturally the part of the demonstration to clinch the argument. It established the capacity of this method to give pupils a thorough mastery of the thought of the Latin through the medium of Latin. Their translation then was a natural and comparatively easy rendering, into the best English at their command, of ideas already clearly grasped in their Latin dress.

Altogether the demonstration gave an excellent synoptic view of the scope and practice of the direct method. Moreover, the fluency and ease with which both teachers and pupils handled the Latin language, and the alertness and enjoyment manifested by the classes, displayed, not merely the working possibilities of the direct method, but also that live interest which is one of its strongest allies.

The demonstrations were most favorably received by the audience—an audience which by its size showed how living an interest there is in the method in New York City and environs. It is to Dr. Chickering that the chief credit is due for the interesting and illuminating program presented. He has given great impetus in this country to the direct method, standing firmly by his convictions and venturing, even against great odds, to put this method into operation in large high-school classes. The result has been that the direct method has proved itself, not only feasible, but in many respects distinctly the superior of the conventional.